

Westlake High School Concussion Management Policy

In response to the growing concern over concussion in athletics there is a need for High Schools to develop and utilize a “Concussion Management Policy”. - UHSAA Sports Concussion Management Policy

Qualified Health Care Professional

- For the purposes of this document, a qualified health care professional is defined as one who is trained in management of concussion and who:
 - is licensed under Utah Code, Title 58, Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing Act; and
 - may evaluate and manage a concussion within the health care provider’s scope of practice; and
 - has, within three years, successfully completed a continuing education course in the evaluation and management of concussion.

Westlake High School’s Athletic Trainer is a Qualified Health Care Professional

1. What is a Concussion

Concussion, or mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI), has been defined as “a complex pathophysiological process affecting the brain, induced by traumatic biomechanical forces.” Although concussion most commonly occurs after a direct blow to the head, it can occur after a blow elsewhere that is transmitted to the head.

Signs and symptoms of concussions include but are not limited to:

Note: A student/athlete may experience any of the following signs and symptoms

Confusion	Disequilibrium
Post-traumatic Amnesia (PTA)	Feeling ‘in a fog’, ‘zoned out’
Retrograde Amnesia (RGA)	Vacant stare, ‘glassy eyed’
Disorientation	Emotional lability
Delayed verbal and motor responses	Dizziness
Inability to focus	Slurred/incoherent speech
Headache	Excessive Drowsiness
Nausea/Vomiting	Loss of consciousness (LOC)
Visual Disturbances, including light sensitivity, blurry vision, or double vision	

2. Concussion Education for Student Athletes and Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

At the beginning of individual sport seasons, student-athletes shall be presented with a discussion about concussions and given a copy of the CDC's "Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports – A fact sheet for Athletes"

This will be presented by the School's Athletic Trainer

At the beginning of individual sport seasons, parent/guardian(s) shall be presented with a copy of the CDC's "Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports – A Fact sheet for parents"

These materials are available free of charge from the CDC. To order or download go to the CDC concussion webpage or use the following link: <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion>

All student-athletes and their parents/guardians will sign a statement in which the student-athlete accepts the responsibility for reporting their injuries and illnesses to the coaching/athletic training staff, parents, or other health care personnel including signs and symptoms of concussion. This statement will also acknowledge having received the above mentioned educational handouts.

All student-athletes shall be **required** to participate in the above education prior to their participation in any sport governed by the UHSAA.

Club sports sponsored by high schools do not fall under the jurisdiction of the UHSAA. UHSAA member high schools are nonetheless encouraged to adopt similar policies to properly manage concussion in the club sports they support.

3. Concussion Education for Coaches

It is required that each year coaches, staff and athletic trainers shall review the UHSAA Concussion management policy, and a copy of the CDC's "Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports – A Guide for Coaches" <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion>

All coaches, coaching staff, athletic trainers and administrative personnel shall complete a course dealing with concussion, its signs, symptoms and management. This course shall be completed prior to working with studentathletes. The CDC, in partnership with the National Federation of State High School Associations, has developed a free web based course, "Concussion in Sports: What you need to know", to be used for this purpose.

A copy of their certificate will be kept on file at the school.

Repetition of the course is required for the coaches every year. Starting 2014-2015 school year.

The "Concussion in Sports: What You Need to Know" on-line course is available free of charge after registering at <http://www.nfhslearn.com>

4. Pre-season concussion assessment

Optimally a concussion history should be included as part of all of a student/athlete's pre-participation physical health examinations with their health care professional.

It is required that every year, student-athletes complete a baseline assessment prior to the beginning of the school year or their individual sports seasons as appropriate. If they do not then they will not be able to participate in athletics. Baseline assessments will consist of the following for the sports of Football, Boys and Girls Soccer, Volleyball, Boys and Girls Basketball, Wrestling, Baseball, and Softball:

Neuropsychological Testing. Generally, pre-season neuropsychological testing is accomplished through a computerized system. While several computer based programs are available, Westlake High School Athletics will use ImPACT (ImPACT Inc.). When used, it is to be completed through a consultant trained in concussion assessment, management and test administration.

Neuropsychological testing programs are designed to measure specific brain functions that may be altered after a concussion. The program is designed in such a way as to allow athletes to be tested pre-season so that post injury performance may be compared to the athlete's own baseline.

Neuropsychological testing may be administered by a licensed athletic trainer or other designated school personnel trained in test administration in a controlled computer lab environment.

Neuropsychological testing baseline data shall be reviewed by an individual certified in administration and interpretation of such results, or under the supervision of or in consultation with a qualified neuropsychologist.

All other sports not mentioned above will use the following pre-season assessment.

Standardized Balance Assessment with the Balance Error Scoring Scale (BESS)

BESS is an easily performed measure of balance that has been validated as an effective means to grade postural stability and is a useful part of objective concussion assessment.

BESS may be administered during the pre-season by a licensed athletic trainer or other qualified health care professional.

5. Concussion Action Plan

When a student-athlete shows any signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion, the athlete shall be removed immediately from practice or competition and evaluated by a qualified health care professional with specific training in the evaluation and management of concussion. The decision regarding removal from practice or competition may be made by school designated medical personnel or a designated school representative.

School personnel, including coaches are encouraged to utilize a pocket guide on the field to assist them in recognizing a possible concussion. An example pocket guide is available as part of the CDC toolkit “Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports” available at <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion>

When possible, the athlete shall be evaluated on the sideline by a licensed athletic trainer or other appropriate health care professional.

A student-athlete diagnosed with or suspected of a concussion shall be withheld from the competition or practice and shall not return to activity for the remainder of that day. The student-athlete’s parent/guardian(s) shall be notified of the situation.

The student-athlete should receive continual monitoring for deterioration. Student-athletes and their parent/guardian shall be provided with written instructions upon dismissal from practice/game. **See page 1 of the “Post Concussion Instructions and Return to Play Clearance Form” for a copy of discharge instructions.**

<http://www.uhsaa.org/new/images/forms/ConcussionReleaseForm.pdf>

In accordance with district/school emergency action plans, immediate referral to Emergency Medical Services should be provided for any of the following “Red Flag Signs or Symptoms”.

- Prolonged Loss of Consciousness
- Seizure like activity
- Slurring of speech
- Paralysis of limb(s)
- Unequal pupils or dilated and non-reactive pupils
- At any point where the severity of the injury exceeds the comfort level of the on-site medical personnel

6. Return to Play

As soon as possible or within 24 hours of sustaining/suspected of sustaining a concussion the athlete will repeat neuropsychological testing (ImPact test) to be used as a tool to help prevent misdiagnosis and premature return to play status.

Consultation with a qualified health care professional shall occur for all student-athletes sustaining a suspected concussion. Health care professionals with limited experience or training in recognition and treatment of concussion are encouraged to seek consultation with professionals who have expertise in understanding, recognizing and treating concussion and related symptoms. This consultation may occur by telephone between the local health care professional and concussion expert.

Subsequent management of the student-athlete’s concussion shall be under the discretion of the treating health care professional, but may include the following:

- Referral to a Concussion Care Clinic
- When possible, repeat neuropsychological testing.

- Clinical assessment of balance and symptoms, with comparison to baseline data when available.
- Medication management of symptoms, where appropriate
- Provision of recommendations for adjustment of academic coursework, including the possible need to be withheld from coursework obligations while still symptomatic.

Direction of return to play protocol, to be coordinated with the assistance of a licensed athletic trainer or designated school personnel.

Final authority for Return-to-Play shall reside with Westlake High School's Athletic Trainer

(see qualified health care professional above) or by their designee.

Prior to returning to competition, the concussed student athlete shall have a "*UHSAA Concussion Return to Play Clearance Form*" signed by their managing health care professional.

The incident, evaluation, continued management, and clearance of the student-athlete with a concussion shall be documented.

Access to all documents and forms regarding concussions can be found on the school's website under athletics. <http://whs.alpineschools.org/athletics2/>